Vijayapuram, Kovilkalappal, Kamalapuram and Periyapattinam areas of Tamil Nadu.

(d) There is no production of oil and gas in the Union Territory of Pondicherry. The production of oil and gas in Tamil Nadu for the years 1998-99 and 1999-2000 is as under:—

	1998-99	1999-2000 (April-Dec.'99)
Crude Oil (Million Metric Ton (MMT)	0.365	0.283
Natural Gas (Million Standard Cubic Metre per day (MMSCMD)	0.292	0.357

Taxes Imposed on Diesel and Petrol

†870. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH:
SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in present circumstances, the rates of different taxes imposed on diesel and petrol are required to be reduced in order to bring down the prices thereof in the country;

(b) if so, whether the concerned departments have been made aware of it;

(c) if so, whether any concrete proposal has been sent to reduce the rates of taxes; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

†Original notice of the question received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (d) In November, 1997 Government accepted the recommendations of Expert Technical Group (ETG) and decided the phased programme of dismantling of Administered Pricing Mechanism. The ETG had, *inter alia,* recommended year-wise rationalisation of duty structure (customs/excise) of crude oil and petroleum products. In the Union Budget presented in Parliament on 29.2.2000, the customs/excise duty on petrol and diesel have been revised as under:

	Existing		Proposed	
	Excise Duty	Special Excise Duty	CENVAT	Special Excise Duty
Excise duty				
Petrol	24%	8%	16%	16%
Diesel	16%	NIL	16%	NIL
Customs Duty				
Petrol	30%		25%	
Diesel	30%		25%	